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ABSTRACT

This report explores contributions that schools, communities, and families can make toward preventing and intervening in behavior that places young adolescents at risk. The first part of the report considers characteristics of early adolescents and an environmental balance that capitalizes on the diversity of adolescents to minimize their risk of failing in school and life. Particular attention is given to: (1) the school environment, including the importance of an inviting school climate, appropriate curriculum, sound instruction, knowledgeable and caring school staff, and school organization conducive to healthy student development; (2) the home environment and the importance of partnerships between home and school; and (3) the community and partnerships between the community and school. While the first part addresses initiatives and conditions aimed at preventing youth from becoming at risk, the second part suggests an identification process and a range of intervention responses for use with at-risk early adolescents. The five categories of intervention design discussed are: academic assistance and remediation; pupil services and social services; vocational and career awareness; alternative school approaches; and school improvement and reorganization approaches. The concluding section focuses on two goals for implementing appropriate middle school programs and practices in Maryland and discusses several barriers to healthy adolescent student development. An appendix provides 35 profiles of middle school programs across the nation. A list of 49 references is included. (RH)

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IN THE MIDDLE

STUDENTS AT RISK DURING THE MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS

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IN THE MIDDLE

TECHNICAL TEAM REPORT

Addressing the Needs of At-Risk Students During the Middle Learning Years

Submitted to

The Commission for Students At Risk of School Failure

FOREWORD: TO THE COMMISSION FOR STUDENTS AT RISK OF SCHOOL FAILURE

The Middle Learning Years Technical Team was convened to explore issues about students ages 10 to 14 who are at risk of not achieving their full potential. In reviewing the current research on the middle learning years and examining current practice in Maryland and around the nation, the Team addressed five questions formulated to assist the Commission in developing a course of action for Maryland:

1. What are the developmental characteristics of middle learning years students?

2. What kinds of environments promote the healthy development and achievement of middle learning years students and prevent them from becoming at risk?

3. How do we define and identify middle learning years students at risk of school failure?

4. What interventions correlate to the needs of young adolescents already at risk?

5. What goals should be addressed statewide and what barriers exist to achieving them?

The members of the Middle Learning Years Technical Team who contributed to the preparation of this report represent Maryland's experts on young adolescents. They brought to the task a wealth of knowledge about and practical experience in middle grades education. Their special commitment to the task was demonstrated by their willingness to provide feedback and editorial comments and corrections under very restrictive timelines. We thank the following members for their special contributions to this worthwhile project:

Joan Palmer, Chairperson, Howard County Public Schools

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We want to especially thank Joan Palmer, Technical Team Chairperson, whose leadership, dedication, and collaborative approach account for the quality of the report. Further gratitiude goes to Drs. Richard McCann and Gail Meister from Research for Better Schools and Dolores Queene, Technical Assistant, for all their support.

Phyllis Sunshine
Pupil Services Branch
Staff to the Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS TECHNICAL TEAM REPORT ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF AT-RISK STUDENTS

The years from 10 to 14 constitute a critical transition period in human development. Young adolescents face issues that determine, in significant ways, their ability to function in future schooling and in life. For many, the middle learning years represent a time of decision in terms of continuing schooling. Schools can act as supports for developing youth. This report goes beyond the school to communities and families and asks what contributions each environment can make toward preventing and intervening in at-risk early adolescent behaviors.

Part One explores the characteristics of early adolescents and examines an environmental balance that will capitalize on their diversity and minimize their risk of failing in school and in life. A review of early adolescent physical, psychological, cognitive, social, and character/ citizenship developmental traits identifies the diversity within and between individuals that marks this period. This section of the report highlights factors in the home, school, and community to create a context for study.

- School concerns include climate, curriculum, instruction, staff, and organizational variables. Central to this examination is the question, "How can middle schools act to promote healthy young adolescent development and preclude early school-leaving decisions?" School-based self-analysis and evaluation is one of the procedures recommended for improving school practice and increasing school success with a wider range of students.

- Home and Home/School Partnership concerns include a rationale for the availability, use, and impact of home supports on student development and achievement. This section contrasts the needs of early adolescence with the early learning years and notes the prerequisites for expanding relationships with parents from this point into the high school learning years. Also emphasized is the powerful role home/school partnerships play in keeping schooling on parent and student agendas. Behaviors that schools can use to develop these partnerships are emphasized.

- Community concerns examine the reciprocal relationship between early adolescents and their community. Access to health care, safety, social outlets, and cultural opportunities are balanced with service responsibilities, rights of others, and contributions to the common good. The complex area of community/school partnerships is likewise a reciprocal one. Both institutions should benefit from initiatives to aid and support early adolescents.

While Part One addresses those initiatives and conditions that seek to prevent youth from becoming at risk, Part Two suggests an indentification process and range of intervention responses for use with at-risk early adolescents. An identification of at -risk youth would include:

- Identifying students who are at risk of school failure based on formal and informal data analysis including student attendance, behavior (suspensions, office referrals), achievement (grades, test scores), and teacher perceptions/observations.

- Identifying possible explanations for at-risk behaviors (e.g., analyzing possible "causes" of student performance: the student factors, home influence, community impact, and school environment).

Appropriate interventions should correlate with the needs of young adolescents deemed already at risk. This report offers five categories of intervention design:

- Academic Assistance/Remediation
- Pupil Services/Social Services
- Vocational/Career Awareness
- Alternative School Approaches
- School Improvement/Reorganization Approaches.

In terms of service, the Technical Team found omissions in interventions traditionally used in Maryland and around the nation. Many programs addressing the various needs of students do exist. Rarely, though, are programs structured to meet the needs of communities and homes as they intervene with at-risk early adolescents. This report raises the issue of <u>how</u> and <u>what</u> can be done to strengthen homes and communities in entering into partnerships to support youth.

Two goal statements for the middle learning years conclude this report:

Goal One: To foster environments that promote the development and achievement of middle learning years youngsters, thereby preventing them from becoming at risk.

Goal Two: To design and implement a range of interventions required to help groups and individual students at risk of school failure to become successful.

Finally, the Technical Team reviewed several barriers to achieving these goals in the middle learning years:

- Failure to Address Developmental Needs
- Neglect of Physical, Social-Emotional Dimension
- Tracking Policies
- Inappropriate Staff Preparation
- Alienation through Organization and Structure
- Philosophy Poorly Defined
- Negative Messages
- Nonpromotion Policies
- Inappropriate Use of Data
- Inadequate Pupil Services Resources

- Weak Links to Community Resources
- Irrelevant Curriculum
- Minimal Parent Involvement
- Bias
- Unstable Home Environment

The Technical Team asks that the Commission recognize and consider the barriers to these goals when determining the action and recommendations it will make. The Team notes that much of what needs to be done is already known.

"Whether or not we do it must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far."
Ron Edmonds

INTRODUCTION

Parents and educators agree that middle learning years students (ages 10-14) show the greatest range of developmental variance of any group of children. Students enter the middle learning years with contrasting physical and intellectual development. Highly individual backgrounds of experience reflecting the diversity in homes, communities, and elementary schools contribute to the differing needs of the young adolescent. For some, the legacy of these years is essentially positive. For others, the middle learning years are a continuation of cumulative negative and punitive experiences. Still others enter the period balancing the sum total of their positive and negative experiences.

Early adolescents' needs are not solely a result of early learning experiences or individual abilities. Some students entering the middle learning years will still have problems, even when the early learning years were smooth. The typical turmoil during early adolescence affects each student differently. Those responsible for designing supportive, healthy environments for growth in the middle learning years must recognize the developmental and environmental diversity characteristic of this period. It is impossible to think of or treat all early adolescents as **alike.**

Adolescents need opportunities for learning that reflect their differing and fluctuating identities. Individual classrooms can encompass the full spectrum of these learning differences. For example, student proficiency levels in reading differ dramatically for those entering their middle learning years. While one-third of the nine year olds in the National Assessment of Educational Progress study (1988) operate at the decoding stage, 18 percent of them demonstrate higher order comprehension skills. The largest number of nine year olds, however, enter the middle learning years with a range of basic reading comprehension skills.

The diversity marking this stage of development challenges all institutions: home, community, and school. Gordon (1983) warns that policy decisions for the middle learning years must be based on this phenomenon of diverse development. In examining how institutions can support healthy middle learning years growth, this report responds to several key questions:

- **What are the developmental characteristics of middle learning years students?**
- **What kinds of environments promote the healthy development and achievement of middle learning years students and prevent them from becoming at risk?**
- **How do we define and identify middle learning years students at risk of school failure?**

- **What interventions correlate to the needs of young adolescents already at risk?**

- **What goals should be addressed statewide and what barriers exist to achieving them?**

The Technical Team believes that an investigation of these questions will assist the Commission in its task of identifying what Maryland can do to aid middle learning years children in developing the proficiencies needed for success in the high school years.

CHARACTERISTICS OF MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS STUDENTS

To help middle learning years students acquire the critical prerequisites for success in school and in life, it is important to understand the physical and psychological dynamics of this period.

What are the developmental characteristics of middle learning years students?

Physical Growth and Development

Accelerated physical growth and development trigger the frequently confusing changes of early adolescence. Bone growth often is faster than muscle development, resulting in awkwardness and a lack of coordination. Rapid changes in body contour may temporarily leave some youngsters with larger noses, protruding ears, gangly arms, and posture problems. Although boys tend to lag behind girls in physical maturity at this stage, a wide span of individual differences at the onset of puberty is normal. Toward the end of the middle learning years, some students may clearly appear to be boys and girls, while others resemble men and women.

Early adolescents experience fluctuations in their basal metabolism that can produce extreme restlessness at some times and equally extreme listlessness at others. Ravenous appetites accompany temporary growth spurts. Overall, young adolescents are not as physically fit as other age groups. They have poorer levels of endurance, strength, and flexibility (Dorman & Lipsitz, 1981; Bromberg, Commin, & Friedman, 1980).

Psychological Development

Youngsters between the ages of 10 and 14 experience profound changes in their psychological development. These youngsters are hostages to the chemical and hormonal imbalances that precipitate emotions they do not understand. They can be moody and erratic. At one moment they can be brash and full of bravado, while at another they can be overcome by anxiety and fear. It is not uncommon for young adolescents to feel self-conscious and alienated and to occasionally overreact to seemingly minor criticism. At times they tend to exaggerate their personal problems and believe that no one else has experienced the same problems and feelings. Their apparent egocentricity and preoccupation with appearances and feelings seem to exclude a concern about others (Blum, 1988; Cole, 1986). However, they have a critical need to interact with peers and adults as they "talk out" problems and options (Dorman & Lipsitz, 1981). While this can be a period of unstable self-image and diminished self-esteem, it is important to note that most young adolescents survive this period of great change without evidencing clinical emotional disturbance (Rutter, 1979).

Intellectual Development

During the middle learning years, many young adolescents begin to develop the ability to think abstractly and reflectively (Ault, 1983). The stage may be marked by a transition from concrete-manipulation to conceptualization. Happening incrementally with multiple stops and starts, the transition is specific to each context -- school disciplines, social life, and moral development. For example, young adolescents may develop an insight into an abstract idea like justice or love. A new understanding of mathematics may express itself in an appreciation of symbolism (Flavell, 1985; Gardner, 1983; Flavell & Ross, 1981). Young adolescents begin to formulate goals. Intense curiosity and questioning of previously unexamined attitudes, behaviors, and values is typical. None of these issues is new to the early adolescent, but the expanded vision and perception of this age group may create dissonance with previously cherished ideas, values, and behaviors.

As an outgrowth of their physical and psychological development, young adolescents need active learning experiences as well as interaction with peers while learning. Even though personal and social concerns may dominate their thoughts, they are exceptionally willing and able to learn things in both the cognitive and affective realms if they consider such learning to be useful and relevant. Young adolescents require recognition from both peers and adults to confirm that their efforts are valued and meaningful.

Social Development

Psychological development predisposes young adolescents to conflicts and contradictions in their social lives. Their expanding world view includes increasing emphasis on the peer group. Conflicts in values between peers and family are not inevitable, but can occur (Thomas, 1979). Peers can, and often do, operate alongside parents as models of behavior. Even movie and rock stars may influence behavior and dress.

Vacillating between independence and dependence, young adolescents are insecure in their quest for structure and order. Ambivalent feelings about others are a reflection of ambivalent feelings about self. Frequently they cede to others the right to make critical decisions (Rogers, 1969). Acting out behaviors of aggression and argumentation mirror inner difficulties young adolescents may be experiencing. Nevertheless, they still crave frequent affirmation and affection from parents and teachers. They may sense the negative impact their behaviors have on adults, but still want their love and approval. While early adolescents are quick to reject adults who are insensitive to their needs, they themselves often exhibit the same insensitivity to the needs of others.

Young adolescents need to assume responsibility and assert their emerging independence if they are to develop into responsible independent adults. Opportunities for decision making and community service provide the testing arena for change. These youngsters need to be integrated into the adult world so they can emulate models appropriate for growth. The trying out of new skills connects young adolescents to their future; their ongoing successes breed further successes.

In the final stages of the middle learning years, students encounter a larger social context mirroring the complexity of their social development. The transition from a small, safe, secure, and often neighborhood elementary school to the larger and more complex environment of the middle grades can exacerbate the conflicts in loyalties and values many

students experience (Dorman & Lipsitz, 1981). Learning to cope with these new realities is predictably stressful.

Character and Citizenship

Early adolescence is an exploratory period for the refinement of character and citizenship values. While most youth are essentially idealistic, possessing personal perspectives of fairness, they are often unprepared to confront abstract moral and ethical questions (Kohlberg, 1983). Beginning inquiries into cultural values and the meaning of life are directed to adults during this period. Early adolescents also struggle to establish a sense of social and sexual identity (Erickson, 1986). They face difficult decisions about appropriate behavior among a larger group of peers and adults (Hill, 1980). Temptations to experiment with drugs, alcohol, and sex surface during this period. Middle learning years youngsters can make poor decisions with devastating consequences unless adults who work with them keep in mind their unique psychological and intellectual characteristics.

ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT HEALTHY MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS DEVELOPMENT AND PREVENT SCHOOL FAILURE

The enormous changes middle learning years youngsters experience provide a context for considering ways the home, community, and school might best be supportive. Strong commitment and cooperation among all environments is critical to provide these youngsters with opportunities that promote their success in school and in life, and prevent their becoming at risk for school failure.

What kind of environments will promote the healthy development and achievement of middle learning years students and prevent them from becoming at risk?

During the middle learning years, all the institutions that serve early adolescents -- home, school, community -- must focus on their particular needs . These institutions have the common goals of:

- Promoting the healthy personal and academic development of all middle learning years students.
- Assisting middle learning years students to prepare for productive citizenship and adulthood.
- Preventing the greatest number of middle learning years students from becoming at risk.

The School Environment

Schools have special responsibilities to promote adolescent growth and prevent students from becoming at risk of not reaching their full potential. These responsibilities may be shared with the home and community so that schooling is seen as:

> ... the responsibility of self, family, neighborhood, church, community, and the many institutions which impact on our lives. It is not the responsibility of the school alone. ..But schools can and should provide leadership to others. (Mission of Schooling, MSDE, 1980)

Schools must implement policies that affirm and accommodate early adolescent developmental profiles. Adolescent individuality "becomes a problem when it is stifled, deprived of opportunities to generate success, or (is) negatively reinforced" (Levine, 1988). Adopting a more pluralistic view, a keen understanding of differences among early adolescents is likely to make the process of schooling more humane and flexible for each individual student.

Schools that promote healthy development and prevent students from becoming at risk recognize the importance of 1) an inviting school climate, 2) a comprehensive and

balanced curriculum, 3) an instructional program based on student needs, 4) an effective and caring staff, and 5) a flexible school organization.

Inviting School Climate

Schools with an inviting climate have discovered an important component of preventing students from becoming at risk of school failure. Such schools provide a safe, clean, and orderly environment; respect for cultural diversity; warm, caring, and supportive interactions; high expectations for student achievement; a system for student recognition; consistent, fair and equitable discipline; and a method for assessing student, staff, and parent perceptions of school climate.

A central goal of the middle learning years' schools is to alter the negative messages that earlier school experiences may have conveyed to vulnerable students (Massachusetts Advocacy Center and the Center for Early Adolescence, 1988). Many students who are at risk of school failure find the negative consequences of attending school (repeated failure, diminished self-esteem, conflicts with peers and teachers) outweigh the benefits of remaining in a school program (Fine, 1986). Students, especially those from poor families or minority backgrounds (particularly Black and Hispanic) or females, begin to heed negative messages during the middle learning years. Therefore, it is essential that institutional misperceptions of race, sex, and culture be changed to reduce conditions within the school that alienate youth (Felice, 1981; Fine, 1986; First & Mizell, 1980; Martinez, 1986).

Wehlage and Rutter (1986) note that students' perceptions of school rules and discipline as unfair and arbitrary testify to the failure of schools to distinguish between discipline and punishment or to engage the early adolescent in the decision-making process. Failure to provide students with genuine opportunities to propose, discuss, revise, or appeal school rules sends clear signals to students to conform or leave when they reach high school (Massachusetts Advocacy Center, 1986).

School climate emphasizes the affective domain. Good school climate, however, depends on appropriate instructional practices. These include an assortment of practices that contribute to effective middle learning years school climate: encouraging creative ideas from students; having teachers assume the role of advisors and mentors; tailoring learning activities to the physical and emotional needs of adolescents; developing student moral values, and encouraging innovative ideas from teachers (Binko & Lawlor, 1986).

Curriculum

A curriculum that meets the needs of middle learning years students serves to promote their academic development and prevent them from becoming at risk of school failure. Curriculum for the middle learning years should be comprehensive, sequential, balanced, varied, relevant, and flexible. While focusing on basic skill development, students should be able to explore a variety of interest areas in ways that enable them to make connections and to understand the interrelatedness of all subject matter and the application of a subject to their lives. District and school-based practices that rigidly apply non-promotion policies, tracking, misuses of standardized testing, and rigidly standardized, inflexible curriculum send messages of rejection to students who are marginal in interest or achievement and whose differences cannot be accommodated by such policies (William T. Grant Foundation, 1988). Curriculum at this level needs a dual focus--basic skills coupled with higher order thinking experiences for all students.

Additionally, middle learning years curriculum should provide for the interests of gifted and talented students; emphasize exploratory study, basic academic skill, and personal interests (Binko & Lawlor, 1986).

Instruction

Schools that prevent students from becoming at risk demonstrate an understanding of good instruction. Good instruction depends on a variety of teaching approaches because young adolescents are markedly different from each other and individually change from day to day. Learning should be active, relevant, and exciting.

Too often, according to Goodlad (1984), the instruction in middle grades schools is primarily textbook-based, relying heavily on lecture and discussion. This instructional approach requires highly developed abstract thinking abilities which, according to Goodlad and others, is not appropriate for the developmental level of middle learning years students who are just barely on the brink of abstract thinking. Thus, to meet their needs, instructional strategies should emphasize experiential-and hands-on learning. Binko and Lawlor (1986) suggest that this might include inquiry and problem solving; afford opportunities for laboratory work; use a multi-media approach; and provide a balance between small and large-group instruction.

In contrast to the earlier grades, students should have frequent opportunities to choose their own vehicles for learning. Flexible scheduling would allow continuity in learning, enhancing early adolescent cognitive development (National Society for Study of Education, 1980). Interdisciplinary blocks/units afford the time and opportunity for teachers and students to make appropriate and productive decisions about learning.

School Staff

Staff who understand the developmental characteristics of middle learning years youngsters; who like working with young adolescents; who possess personal characteristics of flexibility, humor, and patience; who model positive attitudes and behaviors; and who understand the critical role self-esteem plays in student achievement could successfully prevent many young adolescents from becoming at risk. Unfortunately, too often middle grades teachers are trained either as elementary teachers or as secondary teachers with a special subject area focus. Between 40 and 60 percent of teachers in middle learning years schools have no training in working with early adolescents (Mc Ewin & Clay, 1983; Mc Ewin & Allen, 1986). Moreover, these teachers rarely have active input in regard to school organizational decisions (Dorman, 1987; National Coalition of Advocates for Students, 1985).

Strong middle schools require strong leadership as well as knowledgeable, caring teachers. While Edmonds (1979) and others in the Effective Schools Movement cite leadership as a condition for successful schools, few middle learning years principals or administrators, reports Dorman (1987), are comfortable with managing a planned school change effort. These principals and administrators report that they have inadequate preparation and inservice support in developing school climate, staff evaluation, team building, internal communication, and/or working with the developmental characteristics of the middle learning years student (Olivero, 1982).

School Organization

The way schools are organized can create a positive environment that enhances learning and personal development and prevents students from becoming at risk. Such a school does not alienate its students. Alienation is closely tied to the increasing sense of anonymity some students feel as they make the transition from elementary to middle learning years schools. Wehlage and Rutter's (1986) research forms a solid appeal for middle learning years schools to provide for small communities of learners, flexible scheduling and grouping, shared decision making, parent education and involvement on school teams, and flexible and coordinated programs of student support services. The Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education (1987) states that the way schools are organized can affect what is taught, the quality of instruction, the quality of relationships that develop between students and teachers and among students and peers, the involvement of families, and the provision of special services.

At a minimum, middle learning years schools should operate from a staff-drafted statement of school philosophy, emphasize close working relationships between teachers and counselors, initiate interdisciplinary team teaching, and provide substantive transitions between elementary and high schools (Binko & Lawlor, 1986).

In designing, planning, delivering, and evaluating middle learning years programs, it is essential for schools to institute a regular program of self-examination. Such an examination allows middle learning grades schools to break the cycle of failure that defines many of their students' lives. Creative problem-solving and a focus on the developmental characteristics of their students help these schools to succeed. Schools that attend to the needs of their students -- regularly examining and refining their practices in the areas of school climate, curriculum, instruction, staff, and organization -- are unusually successful in promoting healthy student development and preventing students from becoming at risk.

Home and Home/School Partnerships

Schools alone cannot promote the healthy development of young adolescents. The family and the community share this responsibility. As in the early learning years, providing for basic needs is the primary responsibility of the family. The need for physical (i.e., food, clothing, and adequate shelter) and psychological (i.e., physical and emotional safety and nurturance) supports are a given. As children progress farther through the educational system, the family's encouragement for success in school increases in importance. However, unique during this time period is the need middle learning years youngsters have for parents to provide emotional closeness, negotiable communication, and enforcement of norms (Younnis, 1988). Young adolescents report that they want to be liked and appreciated by parents. They need to feel close and connected to parents as they move further into their increasingly complex social world. Interestingly, they identify "just talking" and "not doing anything special" as the activities they most enjoy doing with parents (Younnis & Smollar, 1985). They want to use parents as anchors.

The needs young adolescents have of their parents is more complex than those of young children. At the same time, sources of support for the parents of early adolescents are even more limited than those available to parents of young children (Younnis,1988). Nevertheless, some of the sources of support for middle learning years' parents may be the same as those used in earlier grades. These may include adult education, GED, or

English as a Second Language classes held at the school, in addition to invitations for teacher-parent conferences and classroom observations. Involvement in the middle grades also may be different from that in the earlier grades, for parents need to enhance the growing independence of their young adolescents.

As a result, parent involvement in school during their children's middle learning years is often much more limited and much more distant than during the early years (Epstein, 1987). Until recently, the kinds of programs schools sought to develop with parents were limited to seeking parent participation in school or school-sponsored activities, along with parent support to reinforce in the home the academic programs of the school (Brookover, 1982). Such programs tended to benefit most those families who are better educated and whose children shared the same middle class values as their teachers (Davis, 1988). The establishment of meaningful home/school partnerships is one means to benefit students and their families. Epstein (1987) notes that extending membership in the school community to parents creates more "school-like families." At the same time, making more "family-like schools" becomes easier. School is kept on the family agenda. Among the specific parental activities that middle learning years schools can offer are the following:

- Promoting opportunities for parental participation in problem-solving regarding their own child.
- Encouraging parents to be part of school innovations that provide choices for both students and parents.
- Providing opportunities for parent input on school policy decisions.
- Assisting both parents and teachers in communicating with each other more effectively.
- Continuing outreach to parents trying to access the resources they need to make their family environment work to support their children (e.g., parenting courses, social services).

The school plays a significant role in creating mutually beneficial home/school partnerships. Involving parents as partners in their young adolescent's schooling is challenging and may involve:

- Raising school staff understanding that parent involvement activities are worth the effort.
- Developing school staff skills to work with the diversity of parents/families from which their students come.
- Allowing staff flexible time and resources to work with parents/families.
- Finding the time and resources so staff may develop materials and activities to help parents/families contribute to their child's achievement.
- Finding the time and resources so staff may develop and implement with parents/families collaborative projects to improve school climate effectiveness (Maryland State Department of Education, 1988).

Connecting the school and the family through a comprehensive parent involvement program will allow parents to be informed and active in their children's education. Increased student achievement and engagement will be a positive outcome, along with the

increased holding power of the school, an important factor in reducing early school leaving (Comer,1987; Epstein,1987).

Community and Community/School Partnerships

In concert with the home and the school, the community plays a key role in young adolescent development. As children expand their social exploration during the middle learning years, the community assumes increased importance. Communities exert an influence on the young adolescent that can support or impede healthy growth and development. Responsive communities--

> along with good schools and strong families, form a triad that supports youth in their passage to work and adult life. Our country has always held that good families create good communities. Now we also need to work on the reverse--that good communities help build strong families in the interests of youth. (The Forgotten Half, 1988, p.49).

The community can help young adolescents by providing access to:

1. Health Care: Adequate health care available for youngsters.

2. Safe Environment: Local, county, and state government agencies guaranteeing a safe environment for each community.

3. Social Outlets: Opportunities for young adolescents to interact with their peers and with adults in the community.

4. Opportunities for Service: Opportunities for young adolescents to contribute to others in their community.

5. Cultural Opportunities: Opportunities for cultural enrichment that will impart both an appreciation of the past and a love of the arts (e.g., museums, libraries, constructive entertainment).

Among the many traditional ways the community supports schools is through career exploration and financial support of special projects. An expanded vision of community/school partnerships could build on traditional relationships to create a shared mission supporting the middle learning years child. The challenge to the community and the school is to break through the differences that tend to get in the way of creative partnerships. This vision of new partnerships would result in increased opportunities for experiential learning within the community and focused attention on young adolescents' basic needs.

Expanding partnerships could address the welfare of young adolescents by planning ways for them to positively interact within the community in developmentally enriching ways. Youth service activities and community mentor programs are both examples of how this positive relationship and understanding could develop. Engaging selected community adults as "mentors" can serve to challenge and support young adolescents on their path to adulthood. Various models of mentoring programs, such as The Learning Web, match young people who wish to learn a particular skill with adults willing to teach them (Hamilton, 1981).

Allowing the community to be a place where youth learn responsibility encourages the development of positive citizenship. It also provides for the great socialization needs that early adolescents have. Opportunities for community involvement could include improving the physical environment, gathering and communicating information relative to public issues, and serving as helpers in day care centers/elementary schools during their later middle learning years. Such activities create positive community values and provide communities and early adolescents with reciprocally rewarding relationships.

INTERVENING ON BEHALF OF MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS CHILDREN AT RISK

In the first sections of this report the Middle Learning Years Technical Team focused on how schools, homes, and communities might prevent students from being at risk of school failure. Even when all the environments function effectively to address the needs of middle learning years youngsters, events may still occur that will place students at risk of school failure. Therefore, the Technical Team addresses its second area of investigation -- possible mechanisms for intervention when students demonstrate at-risk behaviors. To intervene and help middle learning years students at risk requires an analysis of why students are at risk, and timely, appropriate interventions.

Identifying Students At Risk of School Failure

Young adolescents are expected to 1) attend school regularly, 2) exhibit prosocial behavior (e.g., get along with staff and peers, avoid behaviors that lead to suspension), 3) engage in school work and activities, and 4) demonstrate continuous success on daily assignments, tests, and grades as they work through the school's curriculum/course of study structured to lead to high school graduation.

Some students do not meet these expectations.

How do we define and identify middle learning years students at risk of school failure?

Students who are not completing the developmental tasks of the middle learning years and who are not demonstrating sufficient progress in acquiring prerequisite knowledge and skills for success in high school and in adult life are those considered "at risk" (See What Matters In the Middle Grades, pp.15-24, Maryland Task Force Report on the Middle Learning Years, 1988). When middle learning years students exhibit patterns of inappropriate behavior in school attendance, social behavior, school engagement, and/or academic achievement, they should be identified as at risk of not acquiring the skills they need to become productive members of society.

The identification process is data-based and must combine formal data analysis with informal data review. The process should not label, but rather red-flag those students or groups of students who are or might be experiencing difficulties. Identifying and intervening with students at risk is a process of recognizing or anticipating problems.

At a minimum, staff should analyze student attendance, student behavior (e.g., suspension, office referrals), and achievement (e.g., grades, standardized test scores). It is important to note that informal measures, such as student/class observations, perception/climate inventories, and program analyses, provide a more complete picture of student patterns of behavior, which leads to exploring the validity of alternative explanations for student behavior. For example, if the staff notice that a group of students is receiving poor grades in a particular class, they may analyze the curriculum, the grading policies, instructional techniques, or students' prior preparations for the class for clues to probable causes.

It is important to recognize possible overlap in causes or explanations for the patterns of behavior after identifying individuals or groups of students at risk. These causes or explanations of student behaviors fall into four general categories: individual characteristics, family influences, community interaction, and the school environment (See Figure 1).

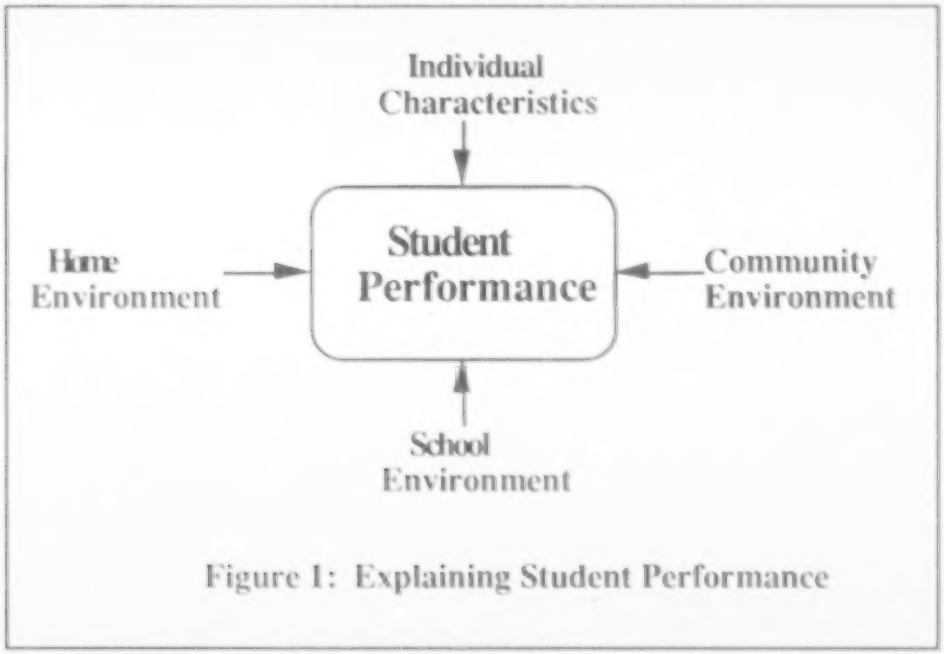

Figure 1: Explaining Student Performance

Careful identification of possible explanations for a student's problem yields a range of potentially helpful interventions. Some explanations may involve the individual, such as issues of poor physical health or learning difficulty. At other times one of the young adolescent's environments (school, family, or the community) may be the root of the problem. For instance, if student failure is related to school factors such as teacher attitudes and expectations, irrelevant curriculum, inequitable distribution of resources, lack of training for teaching staff, inappropriate programming, and/or insufficient support staff, then appropriate refinements in school organization, staff development, school climate, and curriculum restructuring may be indicated. If the student's poor performance is related to family influence, then a family education program, family counseling, or networking family assistance through social services would seem a promising start. If the family influence results from a current stressful event like a divorce, then intensive crisis intervention for the young adolescent would be more appropriate than family counseling. Finally, if a student continuously fails to complete homework assignments that require library research, a community library's inaccessibility may be the explanation.

Middle learning year students at risk of school failure are often first identified as being behind their age-appropriate grade and often develop attendance and behavioral problems connected with their school failure. Consequently, successful intervention programs need to be comprehensive. If the causes for school failure are multiple (home/school/community), then students are much more vulnerable, more at risk of school failure and later not graduating. Students' ability to cope with multiple causes is limited.

Whatever the "cause(s)" of negative student performance, the intervention needs to be tailored to the specific problem(s) and the specific student(s). Only through a careful examination of formal and informal data can an accurate understanding of student problems and a designing of appropriate intervention ensue.

Designing Interventions

The design of appropriate interventions depends on the cause and severity of the students' problem(s). As noted earlier, potential or actual problems that lead to students becoming at risk can be found in the students themselves or in their home, community, or school environments. A wide variety, but small number (when compared to the early learning and high school years), of currently operating programs provide a starting point for examining the question:

> ***What interventions correlate with the needs of young adolescents already at risk?***

A review of current types of interventions shows that they can be grouped into five categories:

1. **Academic Assistance/Remediation** approaches designed for students who fall behind in their school work.

2. **Pupil Services/Social Services** approaches designed for students who need assistance with personal, interpersonal, academic, health, or career problems.

3. **Vocational/Career Awareness** approaches designed for students who need positive alternatives to traditional curriculum.

4. **Alternative School Approaches** designed for targeted groups of students who choose a separate setting and non-traditional instruction.

5. **School Improvement /Reorganization** approaches designed to address environmental problems in specific schools where a large number of students become at risk as a result of inappropriate schooling.

Table 1 shows which of the different approaches is used to address the various cause(s) of students being at risk during the middle learning years. In general, these approaches are designed with the assumption that the student is the cause of the problem. However, with some creative adaptations these global approaches could be extended and modified to assist when environment(s) cause the problem.

Academic Assistance/Remediation

If middle learning years students require academic interventions to redress basic skill deficits, the instructional support must go beyond rote, drill learning and center on bridging the gap between concrete and conceptual learning (Wehlage, 1983). Students most in need of academic assistance are those who score in the bottom fifth on basic skills tests. Berlin and Sum (1988) note that 21 percent of the students who score in this lowest quintile at 14 and 15 years of age drop out of school. Only 3 percent of those in the top quintile drop out. To meet this challenge, several school systems in Maryland and

TABLE 1: DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO ADDRESS THE CAUSES OF STUDENTS BEING AT RISK DURING THE MIDDLE LEARNING YEARS

	ENVIRONMENT			STUDENT
Programs	**Parents**	**Schools**	**Community**	
1. Academic Assistance Remediation	T.I.P.S.	← M.A.P.S. → Teacher Assistance Teams T.E.S.A. HOSTS Math Project Climb Student Team Learning		PASS MAPS Crossage Tutoring BASIC DMM CAI Deficiency Skills Learning Lab Maryland's Tomorrow
2. Pupil Services Social Services	S.T.E.P.	← Maryland Youth Suicide Prevention → ← Maryland Pupil Services Programs Teacher Assistance Teams	Casey Project Homebuilders	Adopt-A-Student Maryland Student Assistance Program Special Needs Prog. Ombundsmen
3. Career Preparation & Experiential Learning			Student Service Alliance School Community Centers Program Multi-Service Community Centers Program	C.E.R.E.S. Maryland's Tomorrow
4. Alternative School Approaches				T.A.P. G.O.T. Futureprint Reading/English Rotation Program IPIMS/Reading Center COFFEE Helping At Risk Students in Middle School
5. School Improvement/ Reorganization		MD Teacher Decision Making ← Comer Process →		

throughout the nation have established computer-assisted instruction laboratories, Saturday schools, mentoring networks, enrichment programs, and peer and adult tutoring programs (Levine,1988).

Summer programs also hold promise for young adolescents with basic skill deficits. Research suggests that 80 percent of the difference between advantaged and disadvantaged learners occurs during the summer hiatus (Heynes, 1978, 1987; Sipe et al., 1987). Philadelphia's Summer Training and Employment Program and Maryland's Tomorrow (begins in the summer of the eighth grade, but continues providing assistance as needed during the school year) address the needs of low performance and low income status students in the late middle learning years. These programs, among other things, provide intensive academic work, life skill instruction, and paid work opportunities. Counselors keep track of students during the regular school year. Summer involvement programs keep school on the agenda for at-risk middle learning years youngsters.

Pupil Services/Social Services

Intervention efforts must also operate in the areas of pupil services and social services to provide student assistance with health, personal, interpersonal, academic, and career goals. School counseling, health services, teacher advocacy, peer counseling and case management are all examples of valuable school-based intervention practices. In addition, in many schools, intervention programs use pupil services personnel, particularly school counselors, to serve as consultants to teachers, train students and staff in mediation techniques, and teach courses on interpersonal and personal skill development (The Center for the Study of Social Policy, 1986).

Using the school as a location for human resource agencies to operate increases the effectiveness of intervention responses. When school-based pupil services staff collaborate with community-based organizations, the mission of the school is extended into the students' community with potential for holding on to students most at risk of dropping out. For example, a community program in Boston engages students who youth workers know have serious school attendance problems, and provides follow-up and support both at school and in the community. Students sign contracts which address the students' own attendance and academic goals for each school quarter. Students signing contracts know that their success will result in rewards of group trips. Students also know that staff will be available to help them meet the goals of the contract.

Vocational Assistance

Vocationally oriented or career oriented programs, especially when combined with counseling support, can encourage student self-exploration and help them find a reason for staying in school. However, these programs appear to have limited benefit for middle learning years students unless they have a developmental focus. Young adolescents are just beginning to see themselves in the world of work. Social interaction and a meaningful access to community participation are more motivating to early adolescents. Community service programs (Lewis, 1987) and the Early Adolescent Helper Programs (City University of New York) work to expand youth's horizons and make school relevant.

Current research on middle learning years criticizes vocational add-on programs for children this age unless they are offered as part of an array of support services in the mainstream program (Cipolione,1986). Community internship and mentoring relationships are most effective when they operate as a part of the curriculum.

Alternative Programs

According to a survey by Raywid (1982), alternatives in education hold special promise for students at risk. Basic skills are emphasized in most alternative programs. Successes are attributed to personalized student-teacher interaction, attention to human relationships, and innovative instruction (Gold & Mann, 1982; Wehlage, 1983, 1987).

Alternative programs are different from add-on approaches in their attention to creating a total education environment. Alternatives that address only the academic or behavioral deficits of students, however, ultimately fail (Raywid, 1985, 1987). The environmental design approach that focuses on positive interactions between students and staff holds great promise for vulnerable middle learning years students (Raywid, 1982; Wehlage, 1987). Too often Foley and others (1982, 1985, 1987) found that students at risk of dropping out of school in the high school years enter alternative programs at a point too late in their schooling to regain their motivation to learn. In designing such programs, educators must make every effort to ensure that students are not stigmatized by enrollment in the alternative, but have *voluntarily chosen membership as a viable option to a traditional program.*

School Improvement/Reorganization

In school situations with a high dropout rate, alternative programs are not practical. In such schools it is better to apply the knowledge about alternative schools combined with the components of successful middle schools to restructure entire programs. Since larger numbers of students begin to flounder during the middle learning years, the lessons of alternative programs can serve as a partial guide to school reform and revitalization of middle grade schools as a whole. For example, the concept of the small school alternative can be translated into the team approach to personalize education for students. The experiential curriculum of the alternative school can be transformed into interdisciplinary learning activities with hands-on applications, which characterizes successful middle learning years instruction.

It is inconceivable for schools with a large number of at risk students to provide enough add-on programs to meet the needs of all its vulnerable middle learning years youngsters. Lipsitz (1984) stresses the need for a strong school infrastructure as an essential foundation for more specialized programs to function properly. She warns:

> Excellent programs can be found in terrible schools. It is possible that the accretion of good programs in weak school structures further weakens rather than strengthens school. ..If schooling for young adolescents is to improve, the school must be the unit of change. (p.11)

While most intervention programs focus on student change, Cipolione (1986) and Natriello (1987) predict that school improvement will be a part of a school's total intervention program. Programs designed to promote organizational change in schools may be more effective than components focusing on treatment of students in reaching their goals.

In general, the intervention programs described above concentrated on providing assistance to students in-part because troubled student performance and behavior require direct action. However, it is important to note that just as single circumstances rarely place students at risk, single interventions rarely yield measurable outcomes. Simple, quick fixes are unlikely to succeed. Wehlage (1983) notes that when programs treat individual students as pathological they are "relatively ineffective" (p.326). He concludes that programs and services that treat the students as if they were the problem have less chance

of being effective than programs that attempt to influence the interactions and relations vulnerable young adolescents have with their schools. Services and programs must be integrated into the total school program for all students if the educational integrity and acceptance of the program is to be maintained. The Appendix highlights several national and state examples of the different intervention program approaches.

CONCLUSIONS

The Middle Learning Years Technical Team believes that the support/prevention practices it has cited and the interventions it has outlined offer real hope to every student, especially those students who are at risk of school failure in the middle learning years. To move toward those practices and interventions:

What goals should be addressed statewide and what barriers exist to achieving them?

Several goals emerge from the previous discussion of the needs of middle learning years' students and the factors that put them at risk of school failure. Maryland's mandate for middle learning years schools involves the following goals to implement appropriate programs and practices:

GOAL ONE: **To foster environments that promote the development and achievement of middle learning years youngsters, thereby preventing them from becoming at risk;**

GOAL TWO: **To design and implement a range of interventions required to help groups and individual students who are at risk of school failure to become successful.**

There are a number of reasons why schools and school systems have difficulty achieving these goals. The Middle Learning Years Technical Team considers several barriers to be hindrances to healthy student development during the early adolescent years.

Failure to Address Developmental Needs

Many schools and school systems fail to recognize young adolescents' unique developmental needs; therefore, inappropriate decisions regarding curriculum, academic challenge, instruction and discipline are made. The lack of correlation among practices and early adolescent development may place middle learning years' students at risk of school failure.

Philosophy Poorly Defined

The mission of schooling for young adolescents is ill-defined. Too many middle schools' philosophy or mission statements focus on the middle learning years schools as primarily serving as a transition between elementary and high school. Consequently, too many middle learning years schools mirror high school practices. Such practices (e. g., departmental

structure, discrete and inflexible 50- minute time periods) do not reinforce most early adolescent development characteristics, thus placing many students at risk of school failure.

Neglect of Physical, Social, Emotional Dimensions

Schools and school systems sometimes stress academic achievement as the primary measure of student success in the middle learning years. Neglecting the physical, social and emotional dimensions of the young adolescent jeopardizes cognitive gains. Classroom experiences do not always recognize or capitalize on the talents and strengths of each student. Withholding classroom recognition of student talent and depriving students of success damages the self-esteem of those young adolescents who are least able to cope with failure.

Negative Messages

Decisions to leave school before graduation do not begin in the high school years. Messages of rejection begin the early years, intensify at the middle grade level, and come to fruition when the law does not require that the student remain in school. Frequently, these negative messages are formalized in school and system policies and practices (i. e., grading). Young adolescents receive these negative messages at a time when they are struggling to build and expand their personal identities. Their rejection of participation in a negative school environment is not surprising.

Tracking

School sorting functions often begin in the early grades and become formalized in the middle grades. Achievement gaps widen. Ability grouping becomes fixed, and students have fewer options and less flexibility. Since early adolescents base their identity on interactions with peers and adults, students use school placements as touchstones. Rigid, inflexibile grouping narrows options for growth.

Nonpromotion Policies

Some school systems have nonpromotion policies for poor achievement. Student experiences with nonpromotion become increasingly common in the middle grades. Retaining students appears to be a questionable practice in light of current research (Holmes & Mathews, 1984). While some students make modest progress following nonpromotion, they do not achieve as well as similar children who are promoted. Grade repetition also creates additional social and emotional stress and alienation. Shepard and Smith (1987), noted that grade retention was ranked third behind blindness and the death of a parent as the most feared life experience for this age group.

Inappropriate Staff Preparation

Middle learning years' teachers usually are trained as elementary or high school teachers. Few have sufficient training in working with young adolescents to enable them to tailor their teaching to the unique instructional needs of this age group. Classroom instruction is often devoted to lectures, monitoring students' seat work and preparation for assignments. Students

are expected to be passive during such instruction. Young adolescents who do not adjust to this passive role may simply leave school at the first opportunity.

Similarly, few middle grade administrators have specialized training in managing a building of young adolescents. Consequently, administrative policies and practices may not reflect the diverse needs of the young adolescent.

Inappropriate Use of Data/Information

While schools and school systems collect much data about students, school staffs may not make appropriate use of this information. All too often, middle learning years' facilities lack a process of communication among adults about specific individuals and/or groups of students. As a result, alienated and vulnerable students may become invisible and fall through the cracks.

Alienation through Organization and Structure

In leaving the self-contained classrooms of the early grades, young adolescents experience larger, more impersonal settings where they often encounter many teachers and different groups of students throughout the day. Interaction between teachers and individual students, particularly vulnerable students, declines during these middle learning years, limiting the amount of feedback, praise for good performance, quick correction of errors, and individualized instruction. The lack of personalization in such settings makes students believe that no one cares, compounding vulnerable students' feelings of alienation.

Inadequate Pupil Services Resources

Too few middle learning years' schools have functioning, coordinated pupil services teams. In the absence of such a team, services to students and their families remain fragmented. Young adolescents, regardless of existing programs, legitimately feel that "no one cares" when service professionals are unable to interface or follow up on services.

Weak Links to Community Resources

Most middle learning years' schools have limited relationships with community resources. Weak links between the school and the community penalize vulnerable students in need of such resources. All too often, community resources are fragmented and thus fail to impact on the lives of children at risk.

Irrelevant Curriculum

Too often, the middle learning years' curriculum is irrelevant to the lives of students and inflexible in its approach. Students are not encouraged to explore a variety of interest areas. Their developmental needs for diversity, service, and interaction are sometimes ignored. Exploration is frequently sacrificed to accountability concerns.

Minimal Parent Involvement

Parent involvement in the middle grades is greatly reduced from the interaction level at the elementary school. This decrease in parent/school collaboration may diminish the holding power of the school for vulnerable students, as well as impact negatively on achievement for those who stay in school.

Bias

Cultural insensitivity by school personnel concerning race, gender, and class bias alienates students. Young adolescents are adversely affected when subjected to discrimination of any kind.

Unstable Home Environment

An absence of public policy or regulation addressing the needs of youth who are living in troubled families places many middle learning years' students in at-risk situations.

Negative school experiences for vulnerable students feed on each other, creating a context that presents insurmountable barriers to students who are often without support systems for coping. The Middle Learning Years Technical Team believes that each school system, and each middle grades school, needs to examine these barriers and determine specific applicability and appropriate actions that will eliminate those factors that interfere with goal achievement. The team agrees with Ron Edmonds when he says:

> *We can, whenever and wherever we choose, successfully teach all children whose schooling is of interest to us. Whether or not we do so must finally depend on how we feel about the fact that we haven't so far.*

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Appendix of Program Examples

Programs listed alphabetically

ADOPT-A-STUDENT PROGRAM

Program that encourages teachers to be listeners and advocates for students.

John Young, Principal
Schenley High School
Central Avenue at Bigelow
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(412) 622-8200

Program Description

The Adopt-A-Student Program pairs one or more students with a teacher who acts as a listener and advocate for the student(s). The development of close staff/student relationships is expected to increase student self-esteem as well as commitment to school norms and activities. By demonstrating a real and personal interest in the student's concerns and aspirations, staff are able to influence a student's level of involvement in school and reduce the anonymity of the school experience. When necessary, they speak on the student's behalf to his/her teachers or other administrators.

Targeted students are those who may be earning passing grades but who remain detached, withdrawn, and isolated from the mainstream of school activities. To avoid difficulties with labeling, troubled students should not be the only ones included in the program. Staff adopting a student includes administrators, teachers, pupil services members, and custodians.

Time and money costs are minimal, but staff needs time to share activities, successes, and problems.

BASIC: CALIFORNIA DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM IN READING

A program to improve reading and writing skills through the content areas.

Donna Kay LeCzel
Benjamin Franklin Middle School
1430 Scott Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 576-0929 or (415) 565-9654

Program Description

BASIC's program provides appropriately designed instruction to both students who read below grade level and those who read on or above grade level. A reading specialist places each student in one of four reading levels. The program's emphasis is on the learning of processes which apply to any content area or learning situation. Learning and thinking processes are taught for the acquisition of new vocabulary, the improvement of writing skills, reading comprehension, and extension of skills requiring higher cognitive levels of functioning. Students are taught to overview and preview materials; they are taught how to organize materials and information to

improve their understanding. Each participant receives intensive reading and writing skills instruction daily in one of the content classes.

Student: Academic Assistance/Remediation

COMPUTER-ASSISTED INSTRUCTION (CAI)

A pull-out program designed to reinforce reading and mathematics skills through drill practice using computer-assisted instruction.

George Nutter
Calvert County Public Schools
1305 Dares Beach Road
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
(301) 535-1700

Program Description

Students in grades 6-8,who are participants in the reading/mathematics remedial program, were identified and selected based on the total reading and mathematics subtests of the California Achievement Test, 1978.

The program is designed to provide supplementary services in the basic skill areas of reading and mathematics. The two major instructional components include the High-Intensity Learning System (HILS) and Computer-Assisted Instruction (CAI).

The HILS component involves supplementary services to participating students in groups no larger than 18. They receive 50 minutes of reinforcement on their diagnosed needs from the Chapter 1 reading mathematics lab teacher and Chapter 1 teaching assistant in a pull-out setting on a daily basis. The lab teacher and the regular classroom teacher plan jointly to assure that reinforcement and follow-up activities are correlated.

The second component is CAI. Each CAI session is 20 minutes long and provides students with drill and practice on their diagnosed needs in reading and/or math. The CAI technician, the HILS lab teacher, and the teacher assistant help students as they work at the terminals. The interaction between both labs allows for frequent coordination and communication relative to students' ongoing progress. The CAI lab technicians provide up-to-the-minute detailed computer reports on each student's progress.

A study conducted by the University of Maryland indicates with statistical significance that the performance of Chapter 1 students following CAI was significantly higher than before.

Student: Supporting Vocational and Career

CAREER EDUCATION RESPONSIVE TO EVERY STUDENT: CERES

A career education program in which students practice their basic skills as they develop attitudes and decision-making skills in a work mode.

Dr. M. Robert Adkinson,
Superintendent Ceres School District
2503 Lawrence Street
Ceres, CA 95307
(209) 538-0148

Program Description

CERES is a comprehensive career education infusion program for grades K-12 which provides students with basic academic and employability skills necessary for competent, productive performance while in school and after leaving. Tailored to the developmental ages of students, the objectives are that students will identify and practice responsible work habits, acquire knowledge of diverse occupations, and apply basic skills to career decisions and actions.

CERES materials are self-contained and flexible, and may be used by any teacher with students of various abilities, including special education and high-risk youth.

Community: Pupil Services/Social Services

THE COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN

A centrally located multi-service center, with a wide range of social, health, and education services to high-risk families and their children and teens.

Donna Stark, Executive Director
Capital Plaza Mall, Suite 420
6200 Annapolis Road
Landover Hills, MD. 20782
(301) 333-0208

Program Description

The Commission for Families is funded by a $2 million grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The project goal is to provide early identification and intervention services for families that will assure each child a permanent and safe home while preserving the family unit. The project provides "one-stop shopping" for a wide range of services. It is based on the assumption that many high-risk families do not have the knowledge or resources (i.e., transportation, reading ability, etc.) to decipher forms and guidelines or to partake of necessary services, even when they are eligible for them. The project provides one place to go for services, and one caseworker is assigned to the family to assure that the family receives the services it needs. The multi-service center will include the following: Family Planning and Teen Pregnancy Prevention Services, High Risk Intensive Evaluation Team, Intensive Family Services, and Assessment and Case

Management. It will also link clients to a variety of other services, as the caseworker has direct links to all agencies within the county system and the responsibility to meet the needs of his/her clients.

The project is governed by a board made up of six citizens appointed by the county executive, and agency heads. The project is scheduled to begin during 1989, and is targeted to three zip code areas in Prince George's County that have many high-risk families.

Student: Alternative School Approaches

COOPERATIVE FEDERATION FOR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES: PROJECT COFFEE

A comprehensive dropout prevention/reclamation program for adolescents at risk.

Jan McTiernan
French River Education Center
P. O. Box 476 North
Oxford, MA 01537
(617) 987-1626, 1627

Program Description

Project COFFEE is an occupational training and counseling program for youth at risk. The program integrates five components:

1. Academic: provides instruction in basic skills based on an individualized education plan.
2. Occupational: provides hands-on educational experiences in an adult-life work environment.
3. Counseling: provides character-building, occupational, and emotional support.
4. Pre-employment Education: designed to increase employability through classroom instruction and student internships.
5. Physical Education: offers a program of recreation adapted to give students a sense of self-accomplishment and group cooperation.

Project COFFEE students demonstrated significant gains in language, reading, and math achievement tests after participating in the project. Dropouts and/or potential dropouts remain in school as demonstrated by a significant decrease in absenteeism. COFFEE students have a higher employability rate.

Schools: Supporting School Improvement and Reorganization

THE COMER SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

A personnel-training and program-planning process which stresses coordination and cooperation between all members of the school community.

Jan Stocklinski
Prince George's County Public Schools
Magnet/Milliken Office

Sasscer Administration Building
14201 School Lane
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
(301) 952-6357

Program Description

The Milliken II Program, established in 1985 as a result of a desegregation court case, offers additional staffing and enriched resources for students who attend a school with limited integration. Each elementary school features a reduced staff to student ratio, a full-time guidance counselor, media specialist, and reading teacher. Skill development for reading, language arts, and mathematics is enhanced through the use of a computer lab in each school. Each elementary school also features an after-school tutorial program, full-day kindergarten, enriched field trips and cultural arts activities, and a summer enrichment program.

The Comer School Development Program has been implemented at each elementary school. The Comer Program, as part of its collaborative approach, utilizes a School Planning and Management Team which is comprised of the school principal, representative teachers and parents, instructional aides, counselors, support staff, and other school system representatives. The teams work to develop a positive school climate, assess academic needs, and facilitate the development of a comprehensive school plan.

Important outcomes of the Comer Program include parental involvement and input, improved relationships among all members of the school community, high expectations for all children, a positive social and academic environment, and the adaptation of the school curriculum to specific needs of students.

Student: Academic Assistance/Remediation

CROSS-AGE STRUCTURED TUTORING PROGRAM (FOR MATH)

A pull-out program in math which focuses on tutoring basic skills. (A similar program exists for reading.)

Dr. Geri Plumb
Boise Schools
1207 Fort Street
Boise, ID 83702
(208) 338-3400

Program Description

This program combines tutoring in basic math skills with continuous assessment of the child's progress on a daily basis. It features immediate feedback and positive reinforcement. The intent of the program is to identify, as early as possible, students who are deficient in basic math skills and need help to function within the system.

Program features include positive, individualized attention, success through carefully sequenced objectives, reinforcement through verbal praise, daily records of progress toward goals, enhanced student self-concept and confidence, and complete pretest diagnosis, prescription, and posttest evaluation systems.

DECISION-MAKING MATH (DMM)

A program for improving students' capabilities in identifying, analyzing, and solving problems.

Laura Dunn
Education and Technology Foundation
4655 25th Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
(415) 824-5911

Program Description

DMM is a math program supplement which places mathematics in the context of situations which students must face in real life. Through the use of student guides, worksheets, strategy cards, home activities, and program- developed "problems of the week," DMM develops higher levels of thinking skills to solve problems related to things such as money, cars, allowances, and other areas associated with the middle learning years.

Students are taught to analyze problems and select strategies for solutions, and apply problem-solving skills to everyday situations.

Schedules, menus, catalogues, checkbooks, maps, timetables, and reference books are a part of instructional materials. Students are encouraged to solve problems independently, with classmates, and with family members.

DEFICIENCY SKILLS LEARNING LAB

A learning lab designed to teach the basic skills of reading, language, and mathematics to low-achieving junior and senior high school students.

Sandra R. Lay
Seneca High School of Oconee County
Seneca, SC 29678
(803) 882-4619 or (803) 638-9691

Program Description

The learning lab provides underachieving junior and senior high school students with effective instruction to master essential basic skills in reading, language arts, and mathematics. These skills will enable students to survive in the "real world" and learn advanced subject matter. The program provides students at risk for possible school failure and illiteracy with a bridge to the future. Test score gains made by students over a five-year period have been greater than conventional standards for determining educational significance.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

FUTUREPRINT

A reading program that focuses on individual needs by using a contract system.

Ann Glaser or CharlotteLawson
California Demonstration Program in Reading
De Anza High School Ontario, CA 91761
(714) 983-2118 or 983-9501

Program Description

Futureprint is a program of intensive reading instruction designed for grades 7 and 8. A supportive, non-threatening environment which emphasizes motivation, success, and student responsibility is established by the reading teacher as students work with a variety of multi-level, high-interest reading materials. The program provides students with literature-based group lessons, shared-inquiry discussions, and cooperative learning activities, in addition to individualized contract work.

Upon entry into the program, students' strengths and weaknesses are diagnosed so that the teacher can prepare a student contract based on the information. The contract system works well because it helps students accept responsibility for their own learning, while offering them challenges and success. When contracts are finished, students complete an evaluation from which teachers write new contracts reflecting student growth and used to guide students in continued reading achievement.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

GETTING OURSELVES TOGETHER (GOT)

A program which offers an educational option for previously unsuccessful, non-handicapped students.

H. B. Marlin, Principal
Gaithersburg Junior High School
450 Diamond Avenue
Gaithersburg, MD 20877
(301) 770-7640

Program Description

The GOT Program aims to reduce truancy and teach acceptable social and behavioral skills. It features a self-contained classroom where, for five periods a day, instruction is provided in English, world studies, science, math, and physical education. Students are guided to accept responsibility for their own education by attending school regularly, developing organizational skills, improving work/study habits, participating in class activities, and maintaining behavior standards.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

HELPING AT-RISK STUDENTS IN MIDDLE SCHOOLS*

A broad-based, comprehensive program to meet the needs of students at risk.

Jerry Dawson,
Assistant Principal
Fleming Middle School
Grant's Pass [* Excerpted from NASSP Bulletin, October 1987, pp. 84-88]

Program Description

Fleming Middle School has an ongoing, comprehensive, multi-faceted program to deal with students at risk. It is a team concept that involves the administration, counselors, teachers, and many local agencies. The program identifies students who are at risk, determines the causes, and provides the following program components on behalf of these students:

1. A formal identification process involving teachers, counselors, parents, administrators, and outside agencies.
2. A schoolwide discipline program.
3. A three-year homeroom class (same students and teacher).
4. A "secret pal" program (a volunteer adult mentor assists student).
5. A youth services team (meets twice a month for most urgent cases) consisting of assistant principal, counselors, school nurse, community mental health worker, probation officer, and children's services area caseworker.
6. An early work experience program.
7. A "Gram" program (sends home notes with positive news about students).
8. "Shoe-leather" counseling and student contact time (greeting buses, in lunchrooms, after school, and so forth
9. A comprehensive retention-intervention program designed to reduce the number of students held back in grade.
10. School goals which include the removal of negative labels, promoting good self-concepts, and mastery of academic basics by all students.

Community: Pupil Services/Social Services

HOMEBUILDERS

Helps families in turmoil and facing removal of a child from the home, to learn new ways of coping.

Jill Kinney and David Haapala,
Behaviorial Sciences Institute
34004 9th Avenue South
Federal Way, WA. 98003
(206) 927- 1550

Program Description

Homebuilders, in operation for ten years, is an intensive social service program targeted to families which, in the judgment of a child welfare, juvenile justice, or mental health agency, are at risk of having a child removed from the home.

The Homebuilders model has the following characteristics:

- Cases are accepted only when a referring agency signs astatement that removal of a child from the home is imminent.
- Meetings are conducted with the family in the home to more effectively facilitate treatment, open channels of communication, and establish trust and respect.
- Staff, sometimes in pairs, are given ample time to resolve the immediate crisis and re-establishharmonious family relationships and better coping strategies.
- No team member is responsible for more than three families at once. Team staff draw on a wide variety ofresources as well as coordinate other community services, as needed.
- Team staff have in their repertoire a wide variety of strategies to help families at risk.

Initial major concerns were that the demands on staff would be unreasonable, that unlimited access to therapists would reinforce dependency, and that costs would be too high. These concerns were never a problem. A realistic caseload for each therapist made the job manageable. Family dependency issues are resolved by the conclusion of the intensive support period. Cost-effectiveness estimates document a five-to-six dollar return on every dollar invested in the Homebuilders Program, when compared with the cost of long-term foster care, group care, or psychiatric hospitalization.

Schools: Academic Assistance/Remediation

HOSTS MATH: HELP ONE STUDENT TO SUCCEED

A diagnostic, prescriptive, individualized approach designed for students at risk.

William E. Gibbons, President
1801 D Street, Suite 2
Vancouver, WA 98663
(206) 694-1705

Program Description

HOSTS Math is a self-contained program which includes a diagnostic/ prescriptive component to accurately place students in a precise sequence of math skills. Each youngster moves from one skill to the next as mastery is demonstrated. Lesson plans for each skill are designed to

build a conceptual understanding before providing a drill and practice. Material is offered in manageable segments with attainable student goals.

Complete lesson plans, student worksheets, tests, and answer sheets are provided, along with computer disks for drills, practice, and testing. Manipulatives are used to encourage mental math, problem solving, and higher-order thinking skills. The program is designed to accommodate various learning styles and to provide a fun-to-learn atmosphere for instructors and students.

A HOSTS Reading Program is also available.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

IPIMS READING CENTER (INDIVIDUAL PRESCRIPTIVE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR UNDERACHIEVERS IN READING)

IPIMS is an organizational model for implementing a remedial reading center for grades 7-12.

Sidney Beckwith, Project Director
Union Springs Central School District
27 North Cayuga Street
Union Springs, NY 13160
(315) 252-9309

Program Description

The program model is a highly effective organizational structure and management system for a supplemental center in secondary schools. The center is staffed by reading teachers, paraprofessionals, and student volunteers. Instructional materials are color-coded into four reading levels.

Once the center is established, students are identified and scheduled into the program. After diagnostic testing and an interest inventory, strengths, weaknesses, and personal interests are noted. Individual prescriptions are written and implemented. Student progress is monitored and periodic progress reports are received by parents, teachers, and students.

After one year of participation, students demonstrate significant gains above the norms on the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test.

Schools: Academic Assistance/Remediation

MAXIMIZING ACHIEVEMENT POTENTIAL TOWARD EXCELLENCE (MAPS)

A program to increase the achievement of students at risk.

Tom Natolly
Frederick County Public Schools
115 East Church Street
Frederick, MD 21701
(301) 694-1453

Program Description

"MAP to Excellence" is a multi-faceted approach to curriculum, instruction, and organization aimed at increasing student achievement in a targeted population of students who through educational, racial, social, and economic conditions are considered "at risk." Support and guidance components for faculty, students, and parents focus the efforts of school, home, and community toward a higher level of effective teaching and learning.

Recognizing that student achievement is not solely a result of classroom experiences, the MAP program features a Community Liaison position that links schools with the students' homes and community, as these also play a critical role in the development of the knowledge, attitudes, and values necessary for achievement.

Extending from kindergarten through grade 12, this program attends to the varied needs of students so that the school experience will be a challenging and rewarding. Its goals and objectives provide commitment and direction in leading to greater achievement for all students.

Schools: Pupil Services/Social Services

MARYLAND PUPIL SERVICES PROGRAMS

Pupil Services Programs assist each student toward optimal health and personal, interpersonal, academic, and career development.

Mary K. Albrittain, Chief,
Pupil Services Branch
Division of Compensatory Education and Support Services
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2433

Program Description

Pupil Services complements a quality instructional program by providing support services that assist students in reaching their full intellectual, emotional, and social potential. These many support services depend primarily on professionals providing assistance in guidance, school psychology, pupil personnel, school nursing, and alternative programming. The goal of Pupil Services Programs is to support the total educational experience, thus assuring all students the opportunity to develop skills essential for successful learning, successful emotional/social growth, and successful employment.

Pupil Services Programs use a coordinated approach to deliver efficient individual strategies by the various Pupil Services staff members. The use of the interacting Pupil Services Team helps to ensure the most effective use of resources to meet students' needs while increasing professional involvement, coordination, cooperation, efficiency, and communication. Teaming allows Pupil Services staff to provide teachers and parents in need of assistance with immediate and effective help by providing coordinated child study.

MARYLAND STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Provides assistance to students engaged in substance abuse.

Linda Roebuck,
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2436

Program Description

The Maryland Student Assistance Program, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education and supported by the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Governor's Office of Juvenile Justice Assistance, and the Masonic Charities of Maryland, Inc., assists school staff in identifying and assisting students who may be engaged in drug or alcohol abuse and who are experiencing difficulty in school as a result.

Participating schools set up Student Assistance Teams consisting of the school administrator, nurse, counselors, and two teachers, plus assistance from drug and alcohol counselors, school psychologists, and pupil personnel workers. After 30-45 hours of training, counseling and resource referrals are provided to students and their families.

MARYLAND STUDENT SERVICE ALLIANCE

This program encourages public high schools to develop community service opportunities for students.

Kathleen K. Townsend, Program Director
Margaret A. O'Neill, School Programs and Mary Heppner, Summer Corps
Office of Communications and Special Projects
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2427

Program Description

The Maryland Student Service Alliance, a program of the Maryland State Department of Education, provides technical assistance to administrators and teachers who want to establish courses and programs in community service, trains teachers, assists in curriculum development, and finds service placements for students. A 1985 Maryland law requires schools to make service opportunities available and to provide credit towards graduation for community service work. This program helps students use their energy, enthusiasm, and intelligence in ways that aid their development into individuals with "the strong and active character crucial to a vibrant national life."

There are three stages in the Student Service Alliance Program: preparation, action, and reflection. The preparation phase includes identification of community problems, consideration of solutions, and classroom and on-site training. In action, students confront community needs directly. Reflection teaches students to evaluate the success of their efforts and their plan.

Hundreds of Maryland students are now engaged in community service projects that include rehabilitation of housing, working with the elderly and others confined to institutions, ecological projects, presentations to school groups, and many more.

Schools: School Improvement /Reorganization

MARYLAND TEACHER DECISION MAKING PROJECT (TDM)

Building local school control through the development of a school management team that provides intensive staff development.

Phyllis Sunshine,
Pupil Services Branch
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2443

Program Description

The Teacher Decision Making Program (TDM) follows an organizational development model in which a school team, headed by the principal, receives intensive training, makes a diagnosis on the usability of that training at their site by reading site data, sets goals in the light of that data, and then plans and delivers appropriate staff development and coaching experiences to secure that goal. Component features of the program encourage individual and team growth for all staff so that all students benefit.

The program is more than a sequence of staff development experiences. Participants attend monthly training sessions as a school team with their principal and cover a carefully selected series of topics: teacher judgments, management routines, expectations/perceptions, data assessment, thinking skills, team building, etc. They meet on-site once a month with the facilitator to discuss "findings" from their classroom/coaching experiences as follow-up to the monthly sessions. As future trainers in their building, the team works to fine-tune strategies to provide data on the success of the strategy with these children, at this time, at this site.

TDM is a three-year program which recognizes that learning a repertoire of effective behaviors is the conditional first step in facilitating student learning and behavior. Making teachers more aware of their own decision-making strategies should enhance their ability to make more effective decisions (Flodan and Feiman, 1980).

MARYLAND YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

Assists school systems in developing good suicide prevention programs.

Michelle O. Prumo and Lynn Linde
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2433

Program Description

The Maryland Youth Suicide Prevention School Program is a framework designed to assist local education agencies to 1) assist in increasing the awareness among school personnel and community leaders of the incidence of teen suicide, 2) train school personnel in individual and schoolwide strategies of teen suicide awareness/prevention, 3) develop and implement school-based preventive and pilot programs, and 4) facilitate cooperative efforts to utilize community resources in the development and implementation of teen suicide prevention programs.

MULTI-SERVICE COMMUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM (MSCC)

Local programs and services are coordinated by MSCC to meet educational, vocational, employment, recreational, and leisure needs of youth and adults.

Clare McNiff
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2362

Program Description

The MSCC provides for the coordination and development of local programs and services to meet the identified vocational, educational, employment, recreational, and leisure needs of in-school and out-of-school youth and adults. The major program components include information and referral services, career and vocational counseling and assessment, and job referral.

Student: Academic Assistance/Remediation; Vocational/Career

MARYLAND'S TOMORROW

An innovative strategy for dropout prevention.

Marion Pines, Senior Fellow
Institute for Policy Studies
Johns Hopkins University Shriver Hall,
Charles and 34th Streets
Baltimore, MD 21218
(301) 338-7169

Irene Penn, Branch Chief
Employment and Development
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2423

Program Description

Maryland's Tomorrow, a joint effort between public agencies and the private sector, is based upon higher expectations for our youth in academic achievement, school completion, and successful transition to the workplace. Its goals are to improve school attendance, increase skills competency, increase the number of high school graduates, and increase the number of those going on to post-secondary education and employment.

This program offers the following services, with the goal of high school graduation for all Maryland students:

1. Basic skills remediation through computer-assisted tutoring and summer learning programs.
2. Work exposure and experience from career exploration, community service, and vocational training.
3. Motivation and leadership development: character development activities, cultural experiences, creative incentives, and rewards.
4. Student support systems: mentors, advocates, and peer support groups.
5. Transition services, such as junior year on campus and apprenticeships.

Student:Pupil Services/Social Services

OMBUNDSMAN

A school-based, semester-long drug education/primary prevention program for grades seven and eight.

Jay Kenny
Charlotte Drug Education Center
1416 East Morehead
Charlotte, NC 28204
(704) 336-3211

Program Description

Ombundsman is a structured course designed to reduce in students certain psychological and attitudinal statistics related to drug use. There are three major phases in the course: the first

focuses on self-awareness and helps students see individual attributes; the second teaches group skills and assists with communication, decision-making and problem-solving techniques which are also useful in other contexts; and the third phase allows students to use insights and skills gained in the first two phases to carry out a project within the community or school. The program is presented to a class two hours per week for one full semester.

Student: Academic Support Program

OPERATION PUPIL ASSISTANCE FOR SCHOOL SUCCESS (PASS)

An after-school tutorial program for low-functioning minority students.

Robert L. Wassman
Julius West Middle School
651 Falls Road
Rockville, MD 20850
(301) 762-5121

Program Description

Operation PASS offers a tutorial program after school, three days a week in the school library, an excellent location for students who have limited resources at home. Teachers assist students in English, math, science, and world studies. Students are permitted to use media resources and are helped by staff persons.

Students in need of academic support are identified by teacher teams. The program is coordinated by the interdisciplinary resource teacher in charge of basic skills. Student comments about the program are favorable.

Schools: Academic Assistance/Remediation

PROJECT CLIMB (COORDINATED LEARNING INTEGRATION - MIDDLESEX BASICS)

A program for excellence in basic skills in reading and mathematics, designed for all ability levels in grades K-12.

Project CLIMB
Barbara Brenner
Middlesex Public Schools Administrative Offices,
Kennedy Drive
Middlesex, NJ 08846 (201)
968-4494

Program Description

Project CLIMB offers a diagnostic/prescriptive approach in the acquisition of reading and mathematics skills, which provides a management design for coordinating and integrating classroom and support personnel; it uses existing instructional materials.

The program has a teacher-developed and teacher-tested curriculum component which identifies basic skills in the form of skills arrays, providing an evaluation system for each identified skill and providing a record-keeping system that monitors student progress.

The training component includes methods for use of curriculum components, identification and correlation of the district's curriculum materials to CLIMB skills arrays, administrative tactics for coordinating classroom instruction with support personnel, classroom implementation and management, and ways to incorporate basic skills into content areas.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

READING/ENGLISH ROTATION PROJECT

A rotating classroom approach to teaching reading/language arts skills to students working below grade level.

Reading/English Rotation Project
Marcelyn Hobbs, Project Director
P.O. Box 475
Thomson, GA 30824

The program was structured to recognize student characteristics and to idntify and meet their individual needs. Students are divided into flexible groups of six to 10, which move from station to station. Different materials and activities at each station are planned for student success. A rotation group consists of 60 students. Each group of 20 moves to three different classrooms during a two-period time block of approximately one hour and 30 minutes. Basic reading skills are emphasizeds in one classroom, reinforcement of reading skills through selected activities (which provide seqential development of skill) in another, and reinforcement of reading skills through various English/reading skill exercies and through the llanguage experience approach to reading in a third classroom. This is a team-taching approach as opposed to the "pull-out" model.

Community: Supporting Vocational and Career

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY CENTERS PROGRAM (SCCP)

After-school use of school facilities for recreational/educational activities for youth and young adults.

Anthony South
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2381

Program Description

The SCCP provides for the use of school facilities during non-school hours to serve the leisure needs of youth and young adults. Through coordinated efforts between local education agencies, and parks and recreation departments, the SCCP is able to provide an extensive range of recreation and supplementary education activities.

Student:Pupil Services/Social Services

SPECIAL NEEDS PROGRAM

This program was designed for students who are absent from school a minimum of 25 percent of the time.

Jerome Lynch, Principal
Wood Junior High School
14615 Bauer Drive
Rockville, MD 20853
(310) 460-9393

Program Description

The goals of this program are to increase student attendance and academic achievement. A structured, small-classroom atmosphere; special motivational strategies; one-to-one instruction; and daily monitoring are program components. Students stay with one teacher four periods a day and are mainstreamed for three elective periods. During the middle of the day, the teacher is free to telephone or visit parents of these students, or to provide transportation where needed. Student tasks are geared to their level of ability to assure success and promote self-esteem.

Community agencies are enlisted to serve as resources for this program; motivational strategies such as movies and field trips are also used. In the 18 months this program has operated, attendance by these students has improved and the improvement has continued for most as they entered high school.

Parents:Pupil Services/Social Services

SYSTEMATIC TRAINING FOR EFFECTIVE PARENTING (STEP)

Training program for parents in improved family communication and effective parenting.

American Guidance Service
P. O. Box 99
Publisher's Building Circle
Pines, MN 55014-1796

Program Description

STEP and STEP-Teen (for parents of teenagers) consists of a videotape and booklet to train parents in the use of effective parenting skills. Topics include understanding misbehavior,

knowing yourself as a parent and your child as an individual, encouraging children's self-confidence, how to listen to children, ways to express feelings and ideas, logical-consequences discipline, how to hold a family meeting, and developing your potential as an adult.

STEP is rated the highest by guidance counselors of all programs for inservice training on parent effectiveness.

School: Academic Assistance/Remediation

Student Team Learning

Assists placing students in four- or five-member, heterogeneous learning teams to master basic skills

Barbara A. Bennett
Dissemination and Training Coordinator
Center for Social Organization of Schools
The Johns Hopkins University
3505 North Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21218

Program Description

Student Team Learning (STL) is an instructional approach consisting of three major techniques: Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD), Teams-Games-Tournaments (TGT), and Jigsaw II. All three require students to work in learning teams that are heterogeneous in terms of academic achievement, race, and sex. In STAD, student teams study worksheets following a teacher presentation, and then take individual quizzes to demonstrate how much they have learned. The quiz scores are summed to form a team score which is printed in weekly newsletter. In TGT, students display their learning by playing academic games instead of taking quizzes. In Jigsaw, students become "experts" on topics relating to narrative material they have read and teach these topics to their teammates. The STL program as a whole is approved for intergroup relations.

Schools: Pupil Services/Social Services

TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAMS

Model program to provide assistance to regular classroom teachers as they work with students evidencing difficulty.

Hattie Washington, Joanne Carter and Hal Hayden
Maryland State Department of Education
200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
(301) 333-2401, 2345, 2480

Program Description

The Teacher Assistance Team model is a system for within-building problem solving by and for regular classroom teachers. It is based on the belief that teachers have the skills and

knowledge to effectively teach many students with learning and behavior problems by working together in a problem-solving process. The goals of the model are as follows:

- To help regular education teachers to individualize instruction to meet the needs of all students--normal, handicapped, and gifted;
- To support teachers in mainstreaming handicapped student;
- To provide an efficient pre-referral screening for special education teachers.

The system is designed to provide prompt, accessible support to teachers. Teachers refer students with problems to a team of three elected teachers within the building. The team and the referring teacher jointly engage in a structured process of conceptualizing the problem, brainstorming solutions, and planning interventions. Parents, students, and other specialists participate in some cases. A series of follow-up meetings are held to evaluate the student's progress and to plan further intervention. When appropriate, students are referred to special education.

The model is very cost-effective. It has been designed to minimize time and paperwork requirements. No additional staff need to be hired. It has been shown to be effective in a wide variety of school districts in metropolitan and rural areas.

Student: Supporting Alternative Program

TILDEN'S ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM (TAP)

This program strives to provide academic success for students having difficulty in regular classes.

Ruth Checker
Tilden Intermediate School
Montgomery County Public Schools
6300 Tilden Lane
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 881-3950

Program Description

Tilden provides a multi-faceted alternative program. One aspect includes basic skills classes for seventh and eighth graders. As successful students exit from the basic skills program and enter into regular classes, the alternative teacher bridges the transition. The receiving teacher informs the alternative teacher about areas of the curriculum that have already been covered. The alternative teacher then tutors the student(s) in those areas. Movement in and out of basic skills classes takes place constantly according to students' needs.

Another component of the alternative program provides tutorial support for students scheduled into the regular program. The alternative teacher provides a third component by co-teaching, instructing small groups, or preparing differentiated lesson plans. The final aspect of TAP includes a program designed to increase the academic success of Black and Hispanic populations.

Results have been that students achieve and feel good about themselves, they remain mainstreamed because of tutorial support, and are able to close gaps in skill-deficient areas.

TEACHER EXPECTATIONS AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT (TESA)

A staff development program, TESA focuses on teacher-student interactions.

Sam Kerman, Program Director, TESA
Bear Valley Elementary School
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Program Description

Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement offers inservice training in understanding and using the relationship between teacher expectations and student learning. Fifteen specific teacher behaviors, which differ for students for whom low expectations are held and students for whom high expectations are held, are identified and organized into five instructional units presented at monthly workshops.

Teachers participating in the workshops are asked to pick five target students in one of their classes for whom they hold high expectations and five students for whom their expectations are low. Following each workshop, each teacher is observed a minimum of four times over a period of four weeks by workshop peers. The observer codes teacher behaviors directed toward the targeted "highs" and "lows" related to the focus of each workshop unit.

TEACHERS INVOLVE PARENTS IN SCHOOLWORK (TIPS)

A research-based process to help teachers improve and increase parent involvement.

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Program Description

Three TIPS models have been designed to help teachers involve parents systematically in their children's education in math, science, and social studies. The TIPS process can be adapted to the cultural objectives and texts of any district or school.

TIPS-Math is a homework review and remediation model. It structures math homework assignments to include teacher-parent communications about the math instructional program, parent-child communications on specific math skills, and parent-teacher communication on the

child's progress. TIPS-Math emphasizes mastery of basic math skills across the elementary grades.

TIPS-Science is a homework completion model. The teacher introduces a science topic in class; a "hands-on" science activity is then completed at home by the students and discussed with a parent. The teacher follows up with an additional in-class lesson or demonstration. TIPS-Science emphasizes the importance of each child doing science and developing science skills across the elementary grades.

TIPS-Social Studies and Art links art history and criticism to middle school social studies. Parents of middle school students prepare (at home) and present (in school) lessons on well-known art work linked to social studies units in American History, World Cultures, and Urban Life. TIPS- Social Studies and Art emphasizes bringing parents into the middle school, providing opportunities for those parents who cannot be present during school hours, and integrating art history and criticism into the social studies curriculum.